



The Iver Village Junior School

Believe. Achieve. Succeed Together.

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7th December 2018,

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To all parents/carers of Iver Village Infants and Iver Village Junior Schools,

Last week, 28th November 2018, at the Infant school there was a parents' meeting to discuss recent events at Iver Village Infant School and plans for the future. Both Nicola Raher and Jill Digweed (the headteachers from the Infant and Junior schools) were in attendance along with Ben Dunne (Head of Strategic Improvement) from Buckinghamshire County Council and Stafford Salt the Infant School Chair of Governors.

Ben Dunne started the meeting by explaining who he was and that he was there to help. The primary purpose of the meeting was to answer parents' questions on recent events. Ben explained that it was important for parents to know the future of their children's education and that they would be consulted going forward.

It was agreed at the meeting that both schools would send out a letter to parents with the questions raised at the meeting to ensure everyone was kept fully informed. Below are the questions that were asked and the answers that were given along with details on how both schools plan to work more closely in the future.

Why have there been a large number of resignations recently from the Infant School Governing Board?

A meeting was held on 16th November, 2018 at County Hall, with representatives from the local authority, 2 Infant School Governors and the Infant School Head Teacher. The meeting was about the issues within the school that had come to light following the departure of the previous Infant School Headteacher. The focus was on obtaining clarity on the school's finances and leadership capacity to move the school forward. Unfortunately, the governors felt that this meeting was handled badly.

One of the ex-governors present at the meeting stated that the then governing body felt that they had no support from the local authority or from the school and felt their only option was to resign.

How is Bucks County Council supporting the school now?

County are helping by providing support from experienced colleagues.

A Headteacher from Oxfordshire is in one day a week to support Mrs Raher.

The Inclusion Manager from the Junior school is supporting with Special Educational Needs one afternoon a week.

The Business Manager from the Junior school is spending one day a week at the Infant school helping with financial matters.

An experienced member of the school improvement team from the Side by Side Partnership Team is helping with teaching and learning one day a week.

What is going to happen going forward?

The governing boards of the Infant and Junior schools will set up a joint working party to look at ways that the two schools can work more collaboratively for the good of all pupils.

There was some discussion about federation and Ben Dunne pointed out that there were essentially three main options for going forward:

- 1) Continue to operate separately- 2 governing bodies, 2 separate budgets



- 2) Federate – 1 governing body, 2 separate budgets
- 3) Amalgamate- this is a process to make one school

All options would be explored by the governing boards through the joint working party and parents would be consulted in full and regularly about the options. Close working partnerships between schools were always dependent on good relationships between the headteachers and a comment was made by a parent that it was nice to see the two school leaders together.

Why didn't the local authority have a clear picture on the Infant School's Finances?

Early indications are that there had been an increase in the number of support staff employed over the previous two academic years which had put pressure on the school's budget. This was also due to overspending on recourses. A parent asked if these decisions had been made in good faith in recognition of the needs of pupils in the school. This could well be the case but important not to spend what you haven't got.

The local authority finance team are now working closely with the school to establish an accurate current financial overview. There was a discussion around what a financial recovery plan might include and as with all these things the re-structuring of staff could not be ruled out, nor the financial benefits of the schools working together to reduce costs by sharing services.

A commitment was made to inform parents when the joint working party would be meeting and that can now be confirmed as Wednesday 12th December at 4pm at Iver Village Infants School.

The outcome of the working party discussions and all future actions, meetings and parent information evenings would be communicated to the parents of both schools moving forward.

With very best wishes,

Miss J Digweed and Mrs N Raher